

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Chair

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED 2018 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM OF THE  
GREATER FLORIDA CONSORTIUM OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC  
BLUEPRINT: EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES**

The Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards is a coalition of ten school boards that have joined to assist each other in advancing educational issues of mutual concern. The member districts include: Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Pinellas, Sarasota, and St. Lucie counties.

In developing the Consortium's legislative platform, member districts submitted legislative proposals for consideration and inclusion in its 2018 legislative platform. On August 24-25, 2017, representatives of the Consortium met in Naples, Florida, to finalize the draft of their proposed 2018 Legislative Program. The draft program includes only those items which were approved by the school board representatives in attendance. Further, it adheres to the Consortium's policy of including only a select number of issues in order to ensure maximum cohesiveness in programmatic priorities and concentration of Consortium resources.

All ten Consortium school boards must review the draft program and to take official action on it. Each issue must be supported by all Consortium members before inclusion in the final adopted program; only the issues that receive unanimous support will be included in the Consortium's legislative program. If a member district votes to remove an issue from the proposed program, the issue is removed from the program. Since the 2018 legislative session is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, January 9, 2018, member boards were asked to review and adopt the Consortium's legislative program as soon as possible. Once all member boards have officially adopted the 2018 Legislative Program, the Consortium will print and distribute the document to the Governor, State Cabinet, all legislators, and interested citizen groups.

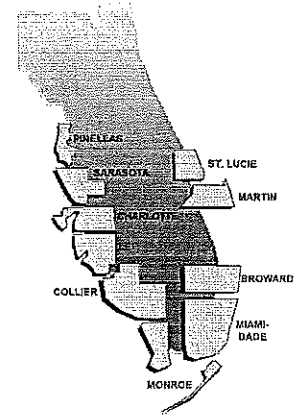
**ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR  
DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adopt the proposed draft Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards 2018 Legislative Program.

**Revised  
H-12**

MEMORANDUM

August 31, 2017



TO: The Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

FROM: Roy M. Terry  
President

SUBJECT: **PROPOSED 2018 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

Attached is the **proposed** 2018 Legislative Program of the Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards (GFCSB). The program is the result of a consortium legislative meeting held in Naples, Florida on August 24-25, 2017. Please forward the proposed program to your school board for its action.

The school board should adopt the entire package; however, only the “Priority Issues” and “Other Priority Issues” will be printed and distributed. The “Additional Issues” will be adopted to give our lobbyist direction as they may arise during the legislative process, but will not be printed in the priority program.

The three-highlighted-bold “Priority Issues” are ones that are of greater impact to the GFCSB.

Please remind your board that, under the consortium bylaws, if any board rejects any issue, that issue automatically is removed from the program. No item may be amended, but must be accepted or rejected; however, an “Other Priority” issue may be moved to the “Additional Issues” document by the vote of one board.

Committee meetings begin this year on September 11, 2017 with the 60-day regular session beginning on January 9, 2018.

We will be scheduling an advocacy visit to Tallahassee during committee meetings on Wednesday, October 25, 2017. More information on this will be forwarded soon.

We will also be forwarding a plan for community involvement developed by Miami-Dade and a survey request for critical data.

We would appreciate your expediting action on the 2018 GFCSB Program so that we can move ahead in seeking support for the issues it contains.

Please send the results of your school board’s action to [tomcerra@gmail.com](mailto:tomcerra@gmail.com).

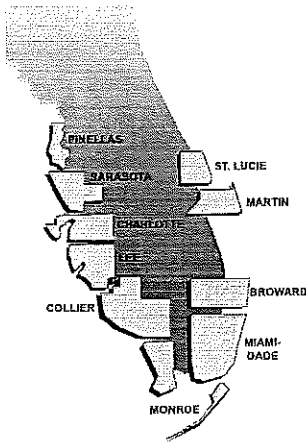
Thank you.

RMT:apw  
Attachments

*Roy Terry  
President  
Collier County*

*Debbie Hawley  
President-Elect  
St. Lucie County*

*Andy Griffiths  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Monroe County*



**GREATER FLORIDA CONSORTIUM  
OF  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
2018 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

Constitution of the State of Florida, Article IX - - Section I.

“The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida. It is therefore a paramount duty of the State to make adequate provision for the education of all the children residing within its borders. Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education....”

**GOAL:** TO INCREASE, ON A PHASED-IN BASIS, THE AVERAGE PER STUDENT FUNDING TO ENSURE THAT FLORIDA IS IN THE TOP HALF OF THE STATES AND CAN PROVIDE A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION TO ENABLE ITS STUDENTS TO COMPETE AND EXCEL IN THE GLOBAL MARKET PLACE.

ENSURE THAT, IN ALL CASES, LEGISLATION BE EVALUATED TO PROVIDE THAT IT DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND HOME RULE AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL BOARDS TO “OPERATE, CONTROL, AND SUPERVISE” ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

**PRIORITY ISSUES**

**RESPECT THE CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

“The school board shall operate, control and supervise all free public schools within the school district and determine the rate of school district taxes within the limits prescribed herein. Two or more school districts may operate and finance joint educational programs.” – The Florida Constitution, Article IX, Section 4(b).

**FUNDING**

Allocate sufficient total funds with flexibility to enable school districts to support: guaranteed continuation budgets that provide for enrollment changes, inflationary increases, competitive salaries and benefits for teachers and other personnel and quality program improvements, by increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for FY 2018-19 at least four percent per student in total potential state and local dollars, exclusive of categorical programs.

**CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDING**

Restore the full optional 2.0 mill levy for capital purposes to meet school maintenance and technology needs and reject any further reduction and continue the flexibility to use this capital revenue to pay property and casualty insurance premiums; to purchase equipment to implement on-line testing; and, to purchase software required to run equipment or other critical capital or operational needs.

Roy Terry  
President  
Collier County

Debbie Hawley  
President-Elect  
St. Lucie County

Andy Griffiths  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Monroe County

## OTHER PRIORITY ISSUES

### RESPECT THE CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL BOARDS

- Recognize school board's authority to control **Local District Capital Outlay** spending without any required diversion.
- Return control of **Title I spending** to local school board discretion to support district improvement efforts for students.
- Maximize local authority as envisioned by the **Florida Constitution**.
- Allow school boards to waive the same laws and rules that **charter schools** can waive on a district-wide basis.

### FUNDING

- Ensure that any changes to the **District Cost Differential** reflect the costs of housing, insurance, poverty, and transportation, rather than wages.
- Oppose further equalization of the **Local Discretionary Millage**.
- Uphold the **90 percent rule** in the FEFP, and fund state mandates for Transportation and Instructional Materials entirely from state revenue and do not include this funding when calculating the 90 percent rule.
- Maintain the **Required Local Effort (RLE)** or mitigate any impact of the rollback rate.
- Restore **workforce education funding** to 2007 levels and commit to annual increases thereafter for school districts to meet state and regional workforce needs as outlined by the Department of Economic Opportunity.

### CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDING

- Prohibit the **personal enrichment** of charter operators from public funds.
- Establish a **long-term, stable, and recurring revenue source** to provide increased school construction funds to support new facilities, renovations, replacement schools, school maintenance, land acquisition, mandated class size reduction, hurricane shelter retrofitting, pre-kindergarten programs housed in public schools, and the additional costs of constructing environmentally-efficient "green" schools.
- Eliminate the "**may not exceed the cost per student station**" provision as it applies to new construction using any non-state funds.

### CRITICAL TEACHER SHORTAGE

- **Fund strategies**, such as teacher fellowship and loan forgiveness programs, to recruit and retain teachers.
- Provide for **hiring of instructional personnel as substitute teachers** and hiring of retired bus drivers on a part-time basis after one month after termination without penalty to their state retirement pension.
- Expand options for individuals to obtain **temporary teacher certification** and, subsequently, full professional certification who demonstrated their work to be highly effective.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Require all **pre-K teachers to meet the same certification requirements**, regardless of provider, and provide adequate funding for training.
- Fund an **optional full-day voluntary pre-K (VPK) program**.

### ACCOUNTABILITY AND STATE ASSESSMENT

- **Move the June 30<sup>th</sup> FLDOE reporting deadline** for FSA tests back to June 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Give districts **greater flexibility in determining 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retentions and promotion criteria** to measure each student's progress and customize his/her education plan.
- Enhance **state funding for educator professional development and training** on Florida State Standards, the related assessments, required use of technology.

# 2018 ADDITIONAL ISSUES

## Accountability

- Extend the option of **paper/pencil exams for expansion to grades 7-10** for Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics.
- **Establish and administer only one high school ELA/ FSA requirement for graduation in grade 9** as this would reduce required assessments at an entire grade level and allow greater flexibility for students to self-select assessments, such as the SAT and/or ACT or industry certification programs.
- Continue to **streamline and reduce the amount of state-required student assessment** to bring it in line with requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), also ensuring the FLDOE concordance with SAT/ACT exams with FSA is completed; and provide state funds to cover the cost of SAT/ACT test administration in districts.
- **Continue the use of the Postsecondary Educations Readiness Test (PERT)** as an alternative to FSA Algebra and continue state funding of district administration costs.
- Require the **Department of Education to implement concordance scores** between FSA and nationally-normed assessments, including ACT/SAT, AP, IB, and others, and allow for districts to substitute national exams in lieu of FSA for reading and/or mathematics.

## Workforce Education

- Maintain the **dual education delivery system** that allows both the local school district and community/state college to offer post-secondary career, technical and adult education programs.
- Accurately align our funding model and **provide additional dollars to reflect student enrollment growth** in career, technical, and adult education programs throughout Florida.

## FUNDING

- Provide state funding for any increased costs to the employer's contribution to the **Florida Retirement System**.
- Maintain **Adults with Disabilities (AWD) program** funding.
- Allow for **voter approval of the half-cent sales tax** for operational as well as capital construction purposes.
- Reinstate the funding for **251, 252, 253 on a per student basis, and eliminate the arbitrary cap on gifted students**.
- Extend the term of **locally voted levy from four (4) years to ten (10) years**.
- **Revise the TRIM notice** to advertise a tax increase only when the cumulative tax millage levy is greater than the prior year tax levy and not based on the amount of proceeds received.
- Provide **funding for school counselors** at all grade levels.
- Create a **waiver of tuition for parents and/or guardians of students at Title I elementary schools** who take workforce development programs offered by technical colleges or technical centers on the campus of their child's school.
- Collect and earmark the **internet sales tax** for public schools.

- Restore the FTE definition to provide for **six (6) periods** and fund additional instructional time for **dual enrollment, IB, AICE, and virtual programs** up to a maximum of **eight (8) classes** per student.
- **Fully fund and provide the flexibility in providing the additional time during summer school** or a combination to meet the additional 180-hour reading instruction requirement at the lowest performing elementary school.
- **Increase safe schools funding** to provide for the actual expenditures **for school resource officers** and other related expenses.
- **Eliminate the wealth adjustment** from the sparsity formula.
- Oppose the automatic increase each year for the **Tax Credit Scholarship Program**.

### Capital Outlay

Increase the cap for **vehicle purchases** and **property and casualty insurance** from \$100 to \$150.

### Student Station Costs

Provide for a **district or regional index for the per-student-station cost cap** to keep pace with changing market place increases for labor, materials, and code requirements.

### Hurricane/Disaster Relief

Establish **permanent statutory authority to assist** school districts **with hurricane damage** without negatively affecting resources for other districts, including:

- Providing **an avenue for school boards to seek necessary waivers of state law for up to a year**, such as shortening the school year, in order to resolve some of the immediate impact of hurricane damage; and,
- **Funding all costs** associated with shelter operations.

### Student Safety

Increase penalties for **firing a gun within 1000 feet of a school**.

### Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Funding

Allow districts to **waive the \$45 fee for adult education basic or GED courses** offered to students in jails, stockades, or DJJ facilities.

### Charter Schools

- Focus the **approval of charter applications** to a specific academic or space need which the local district does not or cannot meet or if the district determines the application is in the best interest of the student.
- Exempt school districts from paying **ad valorem tax for leased properties** similar to charter schools.
- Require a **charter school to return any and all public funds**, excluding the Charter School Planning Grant funds, to the sponsor upon the charter school's election of any deferral of opening the charter school.